

Newport Cathedral: Fabric and Estate

The Early Years

c.500

A church, made of probably of wattle and daub, was built on the site of the Galilee Chapel, now the St. Mary's Chapel, by the legendary Gwynllyw (Woolos is an English corruption of the name). He was married to Glawdys, and chroniclers relate that their son Cadoc converted the family to Christianity leading to the erection of the building as an act of penitence which became Gwynllyw's grave.

c. 800

The original humble building was replaced by a stone structure. There is evidence of Saxon foundations still to be seen in the chapel.

11th Century

The church suffered a series of attacks and was plundered and left in ruins.

12th Century

Church granted to St. Peter's monastery, Gloucester. The early Norman nave was added and linked to St. Mary's chapel through the Norman arch. There was also a lean-to south aisle. The monks managed the church for 300 years.

15th Century

The tower was added to the west end

16th Century

The monastery at Gloucester was dissolved. Ownership of the church passed to the Bishop of Gloucester.

17th Century

The influence of Puritanism led to the demolition of the rood screen, some monuments and the font, and installation of box pews

18th century

South porch was the main church entrance. The St. Mary's Chapel had become a charnel house.

1853

A full restoration of the church took place during the incumbency of Canon Hawkins. This included a new chancel arch and a new organ.

The Later Years

1885

Heating installed, and landscaping of the churchyard to create a main entrance to the church through the Tower doorway.

1913

A second restoration carried out. The font was moved to St Mary's Chapel.

1920

Church in Wales separated from the Church of England

1921

Diocese of Monmouth was created (from Eastern part of Diocese of Llandaff) and St. Woolos Church became a pro-cathedral.

1930

Dean and Chapter created by the Church in Wales.

1949

The parish church of St. Woolos was granted full cathedral status.

1960-1963

Major work took place to create a more cathedral-like building. This included new vestries, a new choir chapel at the East end of the south aisle and a large chancel extension with an East window designed by John Piper.

1962

The Queen and Prince Philip visited the new cathedral.

1987

The former choir chapel was dedicated to St. Luke as a reminder of the closure of the daughter church of St. Luke in Bridge Street.

1991

A new hall was built, as an extension to the choir rooms and kitchen.

1997

Complete renovation of the organ.

2015

Removal of pews and restoration of the floor.

2017

Completion of restoration of medieval roof.